1: Burrows--104 (1947-48) Woleaians
116, 471 Ifalik

"The manual operations by which the people of Ifalik get a living from the soil and sea around them have been discussed under the heading 'Technology' [KS: pp. 27-44]. This chapter is concerned with the standards and practices that organize this activity; in other words, with the patterns that govern the control of material goods and the work of producing and distributing them."

1: Burrows--105 (1947-48) Woleaians 1.2
116, 423, 471 Ifalik

"Most of what we would call public property is called in Ifalik the property of the chiefs. One example is the main roads or paths of the two islands; one running along the lagoon side of Falārik between the houses and the shore; the other a 'belt line' around Falārik close to the taro swamp. Another example is the big seines kept in the canoe-houses. The men's house and the plot of land around it, including the overgrown site of the former men's house--all regarded as a unit and called by the one name Katēlū--is also considered property of the chiefs. In this case the ascription to them has additional force, for one of the functions of Katēlū is to symbolize chiefly dignity and authority.

This concept, ownership by the chiefs of property not used by them more than by everybody else, suggests at first glance the feudalism of medieval Europe. But the resemblance is superficial. While ostensibly the chiefs can do as they please with this property, actually what they please to do is limited by tradition. It never has occurred to them to allot exclusive use of the road or seines to favored retainers, in return for services like the military services of feudal Europe. The former use of the men's house as a dormitory for unmarried youths, and the fairly definite tasks assigned to them, look more like services owed the chiefs in return for use of the chiefs' property. But the natives apparently did not think of the young men's work as room rent; at least the youths still perform definite tasks--so far as we know, the same as before--now

that they no longer sleep in the men's house. Nor have the chiefs ever thought of selling or trading these properties of theirs, or reserving them for their own exclusive use. Such uses of the properties seem inconceivable to them; hence, for all practical purposes, might as well be forbidden.

There is no telling what may happen in the future, as the influence of a foreign concept of property grows stronger. However, one other likely result of increasing foreign influence would be waning power of the chiefs. That would tend to counteract any inclination toward tyrannical disposal of property. But the outcome of such a pull between opposed tendencies, as complicated by an indefinite number of other pulls, is impossible to predict.

Meanwhile, what the chiefs do with such property is virtually the same as what our government officials do with property entrusted to their charge. Both issue orders controlling the use and upkeep of the property for the common benefit. For instance, fishing with the big seines, and repairing or replacing them, are done only on order of the chiefs. But fish caught with the seines are distributed among all the households whose men have done the fishing. If there are enough fish to go further, some will be sent to other districts. And when all districts take part in the fishing, the catch is distributed among the whole population."

28: Spiro--42 [7] (1947-48) 1949 Woleaians
116, 471, 421 Ifalik

"Property rights and laws of inheritance of property are clearly defined. Theoretically, the Ifaluk economy can be characterized as state socialism, for all property, the natives claim, is owned by the chiefs. The entire atoll, land and water is their property, as is all manufactured goods, since they can confiscate these, if they wish. Functionally, however, in terms of usufruct, we may distinguish five kinds of property. 1. Free-property: 2. Public property 3. Lineage property 4. Patrilineal group property 5. Personal or private property"